

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 and 12-17 are currently pending. The present amendment amends Claims 1, 3-9, and 12-14; adds Claims 15-17; and cancels Claim 11 without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the present amendment can be found in the originally filed specification and in original Claim 11. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Japan Patent Publication No. 10-138243 to Mitsuo et al. (hereinafter "Mitsuo").

In response to the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-14 as anticipated by Mitsuo, this rejection is respectfully traversed as discussed below.

Amended Claim 1 recites:

A rubber kneading machine comprising:

two horizontal rolls, including an upper roll and a lower roll, disposed vertically close to each other through an intermediary of an adjusting device for allowing a gap between the upper roll and the lower roll to be freely adjusted;

driving means for rotating the rolls;

a screw extruder including a screw extruder main body having screws and configured to supply a rubber lump fed into a hopper at a proximal end to the rolls;

a circulating mechanism for kneading and mixing rubber that is formed by feeding a rubber sheet that has left the rolls to the hopper, the circulating mechanism is constructed of a winding control means for selectively winding the rubber sheet onto the upper roll by differentiating rotational speeds of the upper and lower rolls by a variable speed motor or a decelerator, and carrying means for sending the rubber sheet coming off the upper roll to the hopper;

an extrusion cylinder accommodating the screws, the extrusion cylinder is configured to be attached to and detached from the screw extruder main body and a driving mechanism thereof;

roll frames configured to support the upper and lower rolls and a distal end of the extrusion cylinder and configured to be removable; and

the driving mechanism configured to drive the roll frames and the extrusion cylinder toward or away from each other and to drive the extrusion cylinder and the screw extruder main body toward or away from each other.

It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not teach or suggest every feature recited in amended Claim 1.

The invention as claimed in amended Claim 1 includes a detachable connection between a screw extruder main body and an extrusion cylinder. The invention recited in claim 1 also includes a detachable connection between the extrusion cylinder and a frame. Additionally, a driving mechanism is provided for driving the roll frames and the extrusion cylinder toward or away from each other and for driving the extrusion cylinder and the screw extruder main body toward or away from each other.

Turning now to Mitsuo, Mitsuo describes a sheet forming device for a resin material. Specifically, Mitsuo describes a sheet forming device that is equipped with an extruder 2, a pair of upper and lower rolls 3, 4, and a transfer mechanism 5 for transferring material to be fed out of the rolls 3, 4.¹

However, Mitsuo does not teach or suggest “an extrusion cylinder accommodating the screws, the extrusion cylinder is configured to be attached to and detached from the screw extruder main body and a driving mechanism thereof,” “roll frames configured to support the upper and lower rolls and a distal end of the extrusion cylinder and configured to be removable,” and “the driving mechanism configured to drive the roll frames and the extrusion

¹ See Mitsuo, at the Abstract.

cylinder toward or away from each other and to drive the extrusion cylinder and the screw extruder main body toward or away from each other,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

Instead, Mitsuo only describes that an extrusion cylinder protrudes from a single piece cone shape extruder 2, and a top portion of the extrusion cylinder is connected to a housing of rolls 3, 4.² Thus, Mitsuo neither describes nor implies that the cone shaped extruder 2 is *detachable* from the extrusion cylinder and that the extrusion cylinder is *detachable* from the housing. Further, Mitsuo neither describes nor suggests that there is a driving mechanism that is configured to drive the cone shaped extruder 2 and the extrusion cylinder *toward or away from each other* or to drive the extrusion cylinder and the housing *toward or away from each other*.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Mitsuo does not teach or suggest every feature recited in amended Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1, and all claims dependent thereon patentably define over Mitsuo. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-14 as anticipated by Mitsuo be withdrawn.

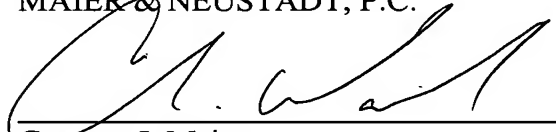
New Claims 15-17 find support at least in original Claims 1 and 11. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added. Additionally, although directed to alternative embodiments, new Claims 15-17 recite features similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that New Claims 15-17 patentably define over the cited reference.

² See Mitsuo, in Figure 1, along with the corresponding description.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

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